Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-5, 11 and 16 without prejudice to the filing of a continuation application, so that the claims read as follows:

1-6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) A method of producing a nickel positive electrode plate comprising the steps of:

(1) filling an active material comprising a hydroxide of nickel into a porous nickel substrate; and

(2) forming a layer of a manganese compound on a surface of said substrate filled with an active material;

wherein said step (2) is a step of forming a layer of a manganese compound on a surface of said substrate by charging and discharging said substrate filled with an active material at least once, and immersing said substrate in a saturated alkaline solution containing manganese ions.

8. (previously presented) A method of producing a nickel positive electrode plate comprising the steps of:

(1) filling an active material comprising a hydroxide of nickel into a porous nickel substrate; and

(2) forming a layer of a manganese compound on a surface of said substrate filled with an active material;

wherein said step (2) is a step of forming a layer of a manganese compound on a surface of said substrate by immersing said substrate filled with an active material in a saturated alkaline solution containing manganese ions, while applying a potential thereto.

9. (previously presented) The method of producing a nickel positive electrode plate in accordance with claim 8, wherein said step (2) further comprises applying a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence of 2 or more onto a surface of said substrate filled with an active material.

10-11. (canceled)

12. (previously presented) A method of producing an alkaline storage battery comprising the steps of:

(1) causing any one of a positive electrode plate, a negative electrode plate and a separator to retain a powder of metallic manganese or a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence or 2 or more;

(2) assembling a battery by using said positive electrode plate, said negative electrode plate, said separator and an alkaline electrolyte; and

(3) charging and discharging a resultant battery at least once,

wherein said step (1) is a step of applying a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence of 2 or more onto a surface of said separator.

13. (previously presented) A method of producing an alkaline storage battery comprising the steps of:

(1) causing any one of a positive electrode plate, a negative electrode plate and a separator to retain a powder of metallic manganese or a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence or 2 or more;

(2) assembling a battery by using said positive electrode plate, said negative electrode plate, said separator and an alkaline electrolyte; and

(3) charging and discharging a resultant battery at least once,

wherein said step (1) is a step of applying a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence of 2 or more onto a surface of said negative electrode plate.

14. (previously presented) A method of producing an alkaline storage battery comprising the steps of:

(1) causing any one of a positive electrode plate, a negative electrode plate and a separator to retain a powder of metallic manganese or a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence of 2 or more;

(2) assembling a battery by using said positive electrode plate, said negative electrode plate, said separator and an alkaline electrolyte; and

(3) charging and discharging a resultant battery at least once,

wherein said step (1) is a step of adding a powder of metallic manganese or a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence of 2 or more in said negative electrode plate.

15. (previously presented) A method of producing an alkaline storage battery comprising the steps of:

(1) causing any one of a positive electrode plate, a negative electrode plate and a separator to retain a powder of metallic manganese or a manganese compound containing manganese with a valence of 2 or more;

(2) assembling a battery by using said positive electrode plate, said negative electrode plate, said separator and an alkaline electrolyte; and

(3) charging and discharging a resultant battery at least once,

wherein said step (1) comprises a step of forming manganese hydroxide in a pore of said separator by immersing said separator in an aqueous solution of a manganese salt, followed by immersing in an aqueous alkaline solution, and another step of drying a resultant separator containing manganese hydroxide in an inert atmosphere or under a reduced pressure.

16. (canceled)